

REMARKS

Initially, in the Office Action dated March 11, 2004, the Examiner rejects claims 1-5, 9-11, 19-21 and 23-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,930,362 (Daly et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,243 (Sayers et al.). Claims 6 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Daly et al. in view of Sayers et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,114,849 (Nodoushani et al.). Claims 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Daly et al. in view of Sayers et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,393,270 (Austin et al.). Claim 12 has been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 13-18 are allowed because of dependency.

By the present response, Applicants have canceled claims 10-12 and 24-29. Applicants have amended claims 1, 13-19 and 30 to further clarify the invention. Claims 1-9, 13-23 and 30-33 remain pending in the present application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claim 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and that claims 13-18 are allowed because of dependencies. Applicants have amended the independent claims to incorporate the subject matter of claim 12 therefore rendering all claims allowable.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 1-5, 9-11, 19-21 and 23-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Daly et al. in view of Sayers et al. Applicants have canceled claims 10, 11 and 24-29. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as to the remaining pending claims.

Regarding claims 1, 19 and 30, Applicants submit that these claims have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 12, deemed allowable by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants submit that these claims are now patentable over the cited references.

Regarding claims 2-5, 9, 20, 21, 23 and 31-33, Applicants submit that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1, 19 and 30 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 1-5, 9-11, 19-21 and 23-33 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

Claims 6 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Daly et al. in view of Sayers et al. and further in view of Nodoushani et al. Applicants submit that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1 and 19 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit

that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 6 and 22 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

Claims 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Daly et al. in view of Sayers et al. and further in view of Austin et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and submit that claims 7 and 8 are dependent on independent claim 1 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons noted previously regarding this independent claim. Accordingly, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 7 and 8 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1-9, 13-23 and 30-33 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

U.S. Application No. 09/672,691

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (referencing attorney docket no. 0172.39100X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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